

**BALDOCK COMMITTEE
20 JUNE 2022**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF: THE POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COUNCIL OBJECTIVES: BUILD THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Committee Grant budgets

1.2 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Engagement Officer has been involved in.

1.3 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community-based activities that will take place during the next few months.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Baldock.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Officer.

3.2 This report is intended to inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation by assisting in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in January 2020.

3.3 The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Council Plan.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1. There are no alternative options being proposed other than those detailed within the text of this report. However, during debate at committee, Members may wish to comment and offer additional views on any of the items included within this report.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

5.1 Consultation with Members has occurred in connection with the allocation of funds for Community Projects

5.2 Consultation with the respective officers and external bodies/groups has taken place regarding funding proposals for Committee Funds.

6. FORWARD PLAN

6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

7.1 With reference to the Council's Constitution, Section 9.3 Area Committees will include budgets for the purpose of providing grants and discretionary budgets that may be used within the area of the Committee for economic, social and environmental well-being. Under the current grant criteria there is no upper limit outlined for grant funding to be allocated which can be decided at the Committee's discretion.

7.2 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1. Baldock Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2022/23. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year, including balances and past expenditure.

7.3 Funding available for the Committee to allocate during 2022/23 is summarised below:

	2021/22 Carry Forward	2022/23 Base Budget	Total Budget
Baldock Town	£1,334	£2,400	£3, 734
Baldock East	£410	£1,000	£1,410
Arbury	£462	£900	£1,362
Weston & Sandon	£359	£700	£1,059
	£2,565	£5,000	£7,565

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1. Future Grants

The Baldock Community Engagement Officer (CEO) has been working with a number of groups / organisations who are seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee. Due to several factors these applications were not able to be tabled at the June meeting so have been deferred until a future meeting. Details of the applications are included in the table below:

Group	Project	Funding Requested
Haven Group	The funding requested is to cover costs for activities planned for those at the Shelter at Templars, Baldock for a period of 6 months.	Group has sufficient funds currently but will approach the Committee later in 2022 if further funding for projects is required..
Baldock Run Talk Run	This is a group for people who wish to use running to help with mental health and is part of a bigger family nationwide. Funding is requested for hoodies / t-shirts, marketing initiatives and promotional materials.	Group currently does not need funding but may approach the Committee later in 2022
Baldock vs Coronavirus Support Group	This group is seeking to assist those who have been adversely affected by the Coronavirus Pandemic. This might include counselling support, careers advice and financial assistance. This group will provide a crucial service in Baldock in the aftermath of the Pandemic	Funding requested to be confirmed as group is still in the process of setting itself up as a registered charity.
Young at Heart Club	This group is seeking funding to assist with venue hire costs.	The group is seeking £565 but their application has been deferred as they do not currently have a bank account, a safeguarding policy or staff DBS Checks which are required for all Grant Applications to the Area Committee.

St Marys Community Fireworks	St Marys PTA is seeking funding support to assist with publicity and equipment costs for the event in November.	The group did apply to the June Committee but given they currently have funding for this year's project they have been asked to resubmit an application in 2023 if they have a funding shortfall for the 2023 Community Firework event.
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8.2 Community Engagement Updates

8.2.1 Royston Environment Group

The Royston Community Engagement Officer (CEO) was assisting Royston Environment Group with a funding application to the Royston Area Committee for funding support for their Sustain-ability event in October.

The group was seeking funding for several elements that could not be funded via the Committee such as waste collection arrangements and Public Liability Insurance which would have been paid for prior to the Committee meeting.

Through good connections with Johnson Matthey, the Royston CEO was able to signpost the group to funding from Johnson Matthey who were able to provide the full funding of £800 for the Sustain-ability event.

Due to timing and paperwork gaps the group was unable to submit the required paperwork for the June meeting and the September meeting would be too late as the tables are needed as a matter of urgency.

The Baldock CEO therefore liaised with Councillor Michael Muir who was able to fund the new tables from his Hertfordshire County Council Members Locality Budget.

8.2.2 Baldock Beast Half Marathon

The Baldock Beast Half Marathon was held for a tenth time on Sunday 27th February 2022. The Baldock CEO provided support on race day which included checking the course and signage prior to the race start, marshal support at a key junction and removal of all race signage at the close off the event.

The event was well supported by around 250 runners and passed without incident.

8.2.3 Baldock EcoFest Event

The second ever EcoFest Event for Baldock was held on Saturday 7th May 2022. The Baldock CEO assisted the organisers with event paperwork, suspension of parking and event promotion and publicity. As with the 2021 event, EcoFest gave residents of Baldock and the surrounding villages the opportunity to talk with local experts on a range of issues including reducing food waste, growing your own produce, upcycling and crafting and recycling and composting.

8.2.4 Baldock Festival

The Baldock Festival returned to Baldock in May 2022. The three-week festival started as always with the Beer Festival which was held over the Early May Bank Holiday weekend. The event was very popular and as well as being a key community event also raised funds for some key charities in the area.

The showpiece event of the Baldock Festival, the Baldock Street Festival Day was held on Saturday 14th May. The Baldock CEO assisted the organisers with all their event paperwork as required by the North Herts Safety Advisory, arranged the parking suspension for the event, assisted with the event set up and provided marshal support on the day.

8.2.5 Baldock Big Lunch

The Baldock Big Lunch will be held on Sunday 5th June to coincide with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The Baldock CEO has been assisting the Baldock Events Forum with the preparations for this event including the paperwork as requested by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group. The Baldock CEO will assist with the promotion and publicity for the event, suspension of parking bays along the High Street and will provide support on the day with event set up and take down.

8.2.6 Ashwell Recreation Ground

The Baldock CEO is assisting Ashwell Parish Council to find funding for new play equipment for the recreation ground. The Baldock CEO has identified £26k from S106 Play Space that can be utilised for this project. The Baldock CEO will be meeting with the Parish Council in the coming months to move this project forward.

Ashwell Parish Council carried out a consultation exercise with stakeholders and park users during February 2022 to ascertain what equipment would be best for the playground.

The Baldock CEO will also be working with Ashwell Parish Council on the pavilion project during 2022.

8.2.7 Sandon Sports & Social Club

The Baldock CEO has been successful in finding S106 monies to assist Sandon Sports & Social Club with costs for replacing the cladding at the venue. £5619.33 has been allocated to this project from S106 monies for Sandon. The club has been able to source the other funding required for the project with works set to be completed during May 2022.

8.2.8 Sanitiser for local groups and events

The Baldock CEO received a donation of 1300 units of hand sanitiser from a company in Royston during April 2022.

The Baldock CEO has distributed all of the sanitiser to venues in Baldock and for events including Baldock Festival, Baldock Big Lunch and Tri Fest.

8.2.9 Tractors on Christmas Lights Tour

Following the success of the event in 2021, the Tractors on Christmas Lights Tour will be returning on Saturday 17th December 2022. The 2021 event was well supported by residents at all three towns and raised over £7.5k for the Garden House Hospice.

The Baldock CEO will again be assisting the organiser with event paperwork, suspension of Hitchin Car Park and will also provide marshal support at the event.

The Baldock CEO has organised a planning meeting with the organisers, Councillors and representatives from Love Letchworth and Hitchin Bid for May to start planning for this year's event.

8.2.10 Ashwell Primary School PTA Events

The Baldock CEO is assisting Ashwell Primary School with a number of fundraising events during 2022, including the Summer Fete on Friday 15th July, Ashwell Fun Run/5k on Sunday 18th September and Ashwell Fireworks on Saturday 5th November.

As well as providing support with the paperwork as required by North Herts Safety Advisory Group (SAG), the Baldock CEO will also be providing marshal support and assistance with event set up and take down.

8.2.11 Events across North Herts

As well as supporting events in Baldock, the Baldock CEO is also assisting organisers of events planned in Letchworth including the Letchworth Colour Run which will be held on Sat 11th June and Armed Forces Day which will be held at Broadway Gardens on Saturday 25th June 2022.

The Baldock CEO has assisted with paperwork as required by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group and will also provide support with event set up and take down.

8.3 **Highways Matters**

- 8.3.1 This section is included within the community update report for each committee cycle to facilitate debate and enable appropriate feedback on any of the proposed or listed Highways related schemes.
- 8.3.2 Any new proposals or revised schemes will be forwarded to the respective Herts County Councillor for consideration who will in turn report back and advise the Committee accordingly.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Sections 9.8.1 (a) and 9.8.1 (b) of the Council's Constitution in respect of the Area Committees' Terms of Reference, notes the following:- To allocate discretionary budgets within the terms determined by the Council and to allocate devolved budgets and activities within the terms determined by the Council. This is outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in January 2020. Section 9.8.2 (h) of the Constitution in respect of Area Committees' Terms of Reference notes that they may:- Establish and maintain relationships with outside bodies/voluntary organisations operating specifically with the area including, where appropriate, the provision of discretionary grant aid/financial support etc. but excluding grants for district-wide activities.
- 9.2 Chapter 1, s1-8 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything provided that it is not specifically prohibited in legislation.
- 9.3 Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides specific authority for the Council to incur expenditure on anything which is in the interests of and will bring direct benefit to its area. This includes a charity or other body operating for public service.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 As outlined in Appendix 1 Committee budget 2022/23.
- 10.2 The agreed base budget for this financial year is £5,000. Combined with the carry forward amounts from the 2021/22 financial year, the Committee has £7,565 to allocate across the 4 meeting of the 2022/23 financial year.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Risk, the Council's performance and risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. Whenever a request for grant funding for equipment is received, the recipient of the funding will be advised to obtain insurance for the item to avoid a repeat request for funding in the event of the equipment being stolen or damaged. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2. Area committee funding is awarded to community groups that clearly demonstrate positive impact on the community and wider environment. The projects outlined in this report seek to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix 1 - 2022/23 financial year budget sheet.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.
- 18.2 Review of Grant Policy Cabinet February 2020.